GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5037
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2008
FLOW OF RIVER GANGA
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Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the worsening environmental conditions on the Gangotri glacier the flow of River Ganga has gone far away from the main source "Gaumukh";

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) & (b) Gaumukh is the ice cave of the Gangotri glacier through which the river Bhagirathi emerges from the glacier. Therefore the question of Ganga going far away from the main source does not arise.

(c) The Geological Survey of India under Ministry of Mines is the Nodal Agency for glacier monitoring which has carried out studies on recession of Gangotri Glacier between 1935 and 1996.

(d) As per the data available with GSI between 1935 and 1996 Gangotri Glacier on an average has receded at the rate of 18.80 m per year. However, further studies by other institutions have shown the yearly recession rate dropping to 17.5 m during 1971 to 2004 and further to 12.10 m in 2004-2005.

(e) Since the river Ganga (Bhagirathi) is still emanating from the ice cave (Gaumukh) of Gangotri Glacier, no steps are required to be taken at present for bringing back the flow of river Ganga. As far as the recession of the glacier is concerned it is a part of natural phenomena and cannot be stopped by using short term artificial measures.